

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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TO

LORD CASTLEREAGH,

*On the insolence of the Borough-mongers in the Day of their triumph. On the New Bank Note Project.*

“ I repeat, that, unless we can make  
“ France pay a share of the interest of our  
“ Debt, contracted in the hiring of  
“ Germans and Russians to enslave  
“ her, we shall, with all our successes  
“ and all our boastings, have only ac-  
“ celerated the destruction of our own system.  
“ In short, unless we make France  
“ tributary to us to the amount of  
“ 20 millions sterling a-year, we shall  
“ live to mourn the triumphs at which we  
“ now rejoice.”—REGISTER, 1 July 1815.

Kensington, 8 May 1822.

MY LORD,

I do not recollect that I have addressed any Letter directly to you since the time when the Collective Wisdom was receiving you with the *clapping of hands* on your return from that memorable enterprise, the re-instalment of the Bourbons. That was the moment of the height of the glory of the THING. From that moment to this it has been on the

*decline.* It is my intention now to have a little sport with you on the subject of the new paper-bubble project that you have on foot; and on that of the Festival that will unquestionably be one of the immediate consequences of its being put into execution.

But, before I enter on these, I must and will look back for a few minutes to the insolence of the Boroughmongers towards us at the time when Napoleon fell. I addressed a letter to you upon that occasion, which began in a manner that I like to remind you of. The base insolence of the bloody borough-crew at that time surpassed any thing of the sort that was, perhaps, ever witnessed in the world. They looked at us, as if they would willingly, if they could have spared the time, have ordered the great body of the people to be torn up and eaten by dogs or bears or wolves. The base and insolent monsters did not triumph over *the French* half so much as they did over *us*. Every look of the ruffians seemed

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to say: "Now we shall see you  
 "manacled for ever! Now you  
 "are as safe as if you were in  
 "the hands of Satan! Now your  
 "doom is sealed." I never shall  
 forget the monsters; and parti-  
 cularly that branch of them most  
 famed for *hypocrisy*, arrogance  
 and cruelty. These became, at  
 the time I am alluding to, perfect  
 devils incarnate. They fairly  
 gnashed their teeth at us; and  
 would, I am certain, if they had  
 met with resistance, have actually  
 bitten us and sucked our blood.  
 But, above all things it is the  
 devil-like *sneers* of this basest of  
 tribes that I recollect so well!

I, however, never flinched  
 before them; nor did I hold my  
 tongue; but, even in those worst  
 of times; those worst of times  
 ever known by any nation, I ad-  
 dressed you in these words, just  
 after the battle of Waterloo.—  
 "Overthrow of Napoleon. My  
 Lord, the intelligence of this  
 grand event reached me on Sa-  
 turday last, and in the following  
 manner. I had been out very  
 early in the morning, and, in re-  
 turning home to breakfast, I met  
 a populous gang of gypsies. At  
 the first view of them, I thought  
 of nothing but the robberies which  
 they constantly commit upon us,  
 and I began to plan my measures

of defence; but, upon a nearer  
 approach to them, I perceived  
 the whole caravan decorated with  
*laurel*. The blackguard ruffians  
 of men had *laurel* boughs in their  
 hats; the nasty ferocious looking  
 women, with pipes in their jaws,  
 and straddling along like German  
 trulls, had *laurel* leaves pinned  
 against their sides. The poor  
 asses, that went bending along  
 beneath the burdens laid on them  
 by their merciless masters, and  
 that were quivering their skins to  
 get the swarm of flies from those  
 parts of their bodies which the  
 wretched drivers had beaten raw,  
 had their bridles and halters and  
 pads stuck over with *laurel*. Some-  
 what staggered by this symbol of  
 victory, I, hesitating what to do,  
 passed the gang in silence, until  
 I met an extraordinary ill-looking  
 fellow, who, with two half-starved  
 dogs, performed the office of rear-  
 guard. I asked him the meaning  
 of the *laurel* boughs, and he in-  
 formed me, that they were hoisted  
 on account of the "*glorious vic-*  
 "*tory obtained by the Duke of*  
 "*Wellington over Bony;*" that  
 they were furnished them by a  
 good gentleman, in a black coat  
 and big white wig, whose house  
 they had passed the day before,  
 between Andover and Botley,  
 and who had given them several

*pots of ale*, wherein to drink the Duke's health. — "And, to be sure," added he, "it is glorious news, and we may now hope to see the gallon loaf at a *grate* again, as 'twas in my old father's time."

Thus I *began*; and now, pray see how I *ended* that Letter. That infamous newspaper, the *TIMES*, had marked out some hundreds of the French republicans *for the gallows*, and had recommended, that we should *compel* the Bourbon to *hang* them. It had also urged the necessity of compelling the Bourbon to do various other monstrous things; on which I spoke, in my Letter, which concluded thus: "There will be some *work* to accomplish all this; yet all this would not answer *the end in view*, unless the French pay a share of our NATIONAL DEBT, the *annual interest* of which will now be forty-three millions sterling; and, unless we could, besides, make them pay their share towards the support of our PAUPERS. Unless these can be accomplished, people will not live *here* to pay part of this debt, if they can avoid it by going to France. Their *loyalty* will not keep them at home to live meanly, while they can live in affluence

by only crossing the channel. If France were a republic, less rich people would go, than will go, France being a monarchy. Our old malady will return with the Bourbons, to restore whom we have so loaded ourselves with debts, that many of our people will be compelled to go and live under them.—All is not over, therefore, when Louis is up again. By disabling France for war, we shall compel her to set about the arts of peace. We shall make France *a country to live in*; a country that the arts of peace will seek. She will, do what we will, soon become our rival in manufactures. Commerce will revive with her very quickly. Amongst all the *fighting nations* she is, after all, the only one that is *lightly taxed*; and, I repeat, that, unless we can make *her pay a share of the interest of the Debt*, contracted to hire Germans and Russians to enslave her, we shall, with all our *successes* and all our *boastings*, have only accelerated *the destruction of our own system*. In short, unless we can make France *tributary* to us, to the amount of 20 millions sterling a year, *we shall live to mourn the triumphs, at which we now rejoice*."

Well, now, my Lord; what do

you think of *that*? I dare say you never *read* this before. Oh, no! You were too great a man: you had the fate of the world upon *your mighty shoulders*! This nation will suffer; it has indeed; but it will suffer a great deal more yet; and suffer it ought, for your elevation, for the power it has permitted you, and men like you, to possess. It is in a fair way of receiving ample justice; particularly the Borough-mongering class, who were so insolent, so lost in insolence, at the time I am referring to. *Rents! Capital! Distress!* Oh, God, how can'st even thou inflict punishment more than adequate to the baseness of those, who licked the hand of "*Old Blucher*" of Borough-Bank-note war notoriety!

The above passages are from the Register of 1st July, 1815. On the 29th of the same month I addressed you again on the exultations of Corruption. "At present I have to speak to your Lordship upon the subject of the expectations, excited here by this event. The Courier says: "*The play is over; let us go to supper.*" And this is the general opinion. When men have long been intent upon one single object; when they have long bent their minds to one sole wish, they are

always disappointed in their expectations, because they have not given themselves time to think of the consequences to be produced by the means which they make use of to obtain the accomplishment of that wish. Thus will it be with *John Bull* who has been made to believe, that, if Napoleon could be gotten rid of, England would be freed from all the calamities which she feels; that she would once more come back to her former state; and that the visits of the taxing people would cease to be as frequent as those of the apothecary. Napoleon is actually our prisoner, but *still the taxing people come.*—"The play" may be over; but, oh! no! we cannot "*go to supper.*" We have something to do. We have *forty-five millions a-year for ever to pay for the play.* This is no pleasant thing. But indeed the play is *not* over. The *first act* is, perhaps, closed. But, *that grand revolution*, that bright star, which burst forth in the year 1789, is still sending forth its light all over the world. In that year, feudal and ecclesiastical tyranny, ignorance and superstition received the first heavy blow: they have since received others; and in spite of all that can be now done in their favour, they are



*destined to perish.*—The farmers hope, that you will do something to *prevent abundant harvests in France*; the tradesmen, that you will make things *as dear as they are in England*, to prevent their customers from *emigrating*; and there is another class, who, I dare say, are full as anxious, that you should *re-establish tithes*. How disappointed they will be! How short-lived will be their triumph! How they will stare at one another; how mutually insipid will be their talk, when they find, that the only real solid effect produced by this brilliant achievement will be *an addition to their taxes!*”

Why, my Lord, had it not been for this prospective view of things, I should have *died*. I never could have endured the insolence of those days, had I not foreseen, that the *present days* would come. It is quite necessary that I *now* remind you of what I said in those days of ferocious Boroughmongering triumph. All that was called “*Opposition*” was silenced. The far greater part of even *good and true* men thought it prudent to hold their tongues. Many and many a score left off (after long reading) to read what I wrote. They began to *doubt*. They feared I was wrong. They

yielded to the torrent. Many, however, still *held firm*. What can describe the satisfaction that these *now* enjoy? “What! enjoy satisfaction at the distresses of their *country*?” Oh, no! But, at the distresses of those, who were ready to *bite* us in 1814 and 1815; and whose distresses must be great *indeed*, before the *country* can be *relieved*!

The great cause of all that now creates what is called distress, and which must lead to something or other full of *great danger*; the great cause has been, and is, a want of a reform of the House of Commons. This has been the cause of *undertaking* useless and wicked wars, and also the cause of making them *long and wasteful*. But, it has also been the cause of unparalleled *ignorance* in conducting the nation's affairs; and of this ignorance how complete is the proof! When we blame men for not having done a thing, or for having done a thing, it is, in order to establish the justice of our charge, not sufficient for us to show that the result of their conduct has been mischievous: we must also show, that they had it in their power to act otherwise; and, if to this showing we add the proof, that some other man recommended them to act otherwise,

then the ground of our blame is complete.

Have not I, then, a right, a clear and indisputable right, to blame you and your colleagues for whatever calamities the nation, Ireland as well as England has now to endure? For sixteen, nay, for twenty, years, have you not been warned by *me* of all the evils and all the dangers that you have now brought upon the country? Have you, then, any excuse to plead? Others have warned you too; but, others have grown *weary*. I have stuck to you from first to last: and, there is this peculiar circumstance belonging to me, that I was the person pointed out by yourself, by you in particular, as having the ambition to *aspire to office without being qualified for it!* An impudent and false and vulgar accusation as far as related to the first part of it, and vulgar and silly as far as related to the last part of it. But, if I were *unqualified* for the managing of such matters, what the Devil are *you!* •

“Fools rush in where angels fear to tread;” and, I do assure you, that, though endowed with great capacity for labour, and though thinking that I well understand most of the interests of the nation, I should be by no means

tranquil under the thought of having any one of its great interests committed to my management. I should be full of doubts and fears as to the adequacy of my capacity. But, if this is the case with *me*, with what doubts and fears ought not *you* to be harassed? And, yet, you appear never to feel either the one or the other! You go on as boldly and as glibly as if we were all put to school to you.

However, this nation has now found out what it is to be under the dominion of bare brass, “brass and nothing else.” In the schemes, the ridiculous and monstrous schemes, which I have by-and-by to notice, this nation has the practical illustration of the effect of being under the guidance of this brazen and flippant system of sway.

At the time, to which I have just referred, it became a duty which I thought I owed my country to show clearly the causes, which were then *beginning* to produce those consequences that now appear so hideous. It is, at this time, of great importance that I establish, beyond all dispute, the fact, that the *doctrine of currency*, as relating to our present case, was well understood by me and well laid before you *from the very*

*outset.* It is my desire; that is to say, if I can do it without becoming a debauched wretch, watching by night and sleeping by day, to which nothing shall ever make me submit if I can avoid it; it is my desire, if I can do it without such an enormous sacrifice as this, to assist in *pointing out what ought to be done*, which I never will do in my present capacity. If all goes to wreck, I have nothing to answer for; yet, I cannot help wishing, that all should not go to wreck. Therefore it is necessary, that I now *remind* the country of what I said *at the very outset* of the evils which have, at last, arrived at such a fearful magnitude.

Let us take, then, the following, addressed to Mr. Vansittart on the 30th of October, 1815. There is nothing that can be said *now* more complete, as to all the main points, than what was said then. It would really appear, that the great body of the nation has now resolved to *echo* my opinions of 1815. Well, then; what a shame is this for *you*? How are you to answer to your king and country the having set these opinions at defiance? And, on what *ground* is it, that you now talk of the measures and opinions of you,

and the like of you, emanating from the "*education* of the country," while the mass of a county-meeting are called "*a populace*?" I insert the following, however, not only as a proof of your obstinate perseverance in error, in spite of remonstrance, but also as serving to illustrate the nature of the measures, on which I shall afterwards have to remark, and which you are now bringing forward as *remedies*. You, I dare say, never read in 1815. You were then *too great a man*; but, your present state is somewhat different; and, therefore, you may, perhaps, now condescend to read. You have found, at last, that those who used to obey your *nod*, are not disposed to listen even to your *prayers*. You may, then, now have your ears open at any rate; and, if you have not, the public have theirs open.—"*Something must be done.*"—This phrase is in the mouth of every man of every class in the country, which feels itself, at the end of this long pursuit of glory and of happiness, in a state somewhat like the citizen, who, after having passed forty years amidst smoke and noise and stench, in order to amass the means of living easily and tranquilly and happily for the remainder of his days, mopes about in his

country box like a fish out of water; or, like a new married man, who has been for months up to head and ears in love, and who, at the end of about four or eight days, according to circumstances, begins to wonder what ails him. A Frenchman told me once, in Philadelphia, that in about a week after he was married, he was seized with the idea, that he was not the same identical person that he was before, and that he looked in the glass and felt his arms and legs (*"Je me touchoit,"* were his words) to ascertain the fact. In the course of a few weeks, however, he found that he really was the same man as before, with a suitable diminution of spirits, or, of what is vulgarly called *pluck*.—Such, or thereabouts, is the present state of feeling in this country. Every one is disappointed. Every one, however ignorant, begins to perceive, that this career of war and this harvest of glory, have not yielded happiness. People do not know *how* it is; but, they know, that they are *all in distress*. They see that we have reduced the French nation to submission to the Bourbons; they see that we have imprisoned Napoleon for life; they hear of the intended Waterloo column; they see that

the Church and all our venerable establishments have been preserved unto us; they see hundreds of English and Hanoverian Knights created; they see *peace* and even *plenty*; and yet they are miserable. Agriculture languishes; trade follows agriculture; nobody has money to pay rent, taxes, or debts.—A *corn bill* has not *protected* the farmer. The cheapness of food has not lessened the misery of the poor. Nothing sells. The nation perishes in the midst of spending the produce of successive abundant harvest.—This state of things draws from every one the phrase at the head of this letter. The Banker, when he sees himself compelled to refuse his usual discounts, tells his applicant, that "*something must be done.*" The Farmer (formerly so gay on his yeomanry cavalry horse, and so steady to hack the Jacobins), when he is offered 17 shillings instead of 37 shillings a-head for his South Down Ewes, squeezes out his thick lips, swells his nostrils, throws his jolter head on one side, with a nod, and exclaims, "By — zummert must be done." The landlord, who has vociferated for war, taxation, sedition and treason bills for two-and-twenty long years, when his steward, instead



of ten thousand, brings him five hundred pounds in money and half a hundred notices to quit, observes, with one of Lord Burleigh's shakes of the head:—"Really, Mr. Trusty, government must do *something*. Parliament meets in February. I do not know what the Chancellor of the Exchequer means to propose, though I am very intimate with him; but *something must be done*." The tradesman, who has, for months past, used the door-knocker much more than his hammer or scissors, when, for the twentieth time, he is told *to call again*, goes muttering away, that "*something must be done*." In short, all agree, that it is impossible to go on long in our present course. The parson, the lawyer, the doctor, the very lowest of labourers say that a change of *some sort must take place*. The "*loyal*," as they call themselves, observe, very seriously, that Parliament must do *something*; and, the Jacobins, as they are called, with more of curiosity than sorrow on their countenance, say, "*now let us see what will be done*."—All persons, of every class, are now Sir, looking to *you*. Some think, that you can conjure money into their pockets; others that you

can pay the soldiers, sailors, judges, placemen, pensioners, and the Royal family somehow or other without money. The farmers generally most firmly believe, that you raise the price of their produce, for which you would have their blessings and the curses of the rest of the country, especially the army, the navy, and the annuitants. What you will do it is hard for me to say; or, rather, *what way*, you will go to work; for, in substance, I know, that you *must* do, in the course of about two or three years, one of three things. You must diminish the interest of the debt; you must cause large additional quantities of paper-money to be issued, so as to bring the guineas back again to be worth 28s. or 30s.; or you must suffer the whole of the paper system to go to atoms.—The people do not perceive the real cause of their distress. The farmer sees his wheat fall from 15s. to 7s. a-bushel. He ascribes it to the defeat of Napoleon, and says that *he* was the *best friend of the farmers*. Others think, that things will *come about*. Others damn the French, and say, that it is their produce that lowers ours in price. Others curse the parsons, and say that it is the tithes which we pay, and which the French do not pay,

which is the cause of our ruin ; and a hungry man in Wiltshire of the name of *Benett* has actually written and published a long pamphlet to show, that the parsons have no right to what they receive. Nobody sees, or, at least, appears to see, that their distress arises from *the debt and the military establishment and other fixed expenses, entailed on us by the war ;* and from the attempt which is now making to bring us upon a *par of exchange with other countries, by diminishing the quantity of our paper money.*—I contended, with Mr. Huskisson, that wheat must continue to be, on an average, about 15s. a bushel, or that the taxes could not be paid in sufficient amount to meet interest on the debt, and to pay the other expenses of the year. You are now trying the experiment of disproving that position ; but, I shall soon see you, I think, compelled to give it the most complete sanction. Again, the Bullion Committee formally declared, that, by *drawing in the paper judiciously,* the Bank might be able to pay in gold and silver in two years. I contended, that this was impossible, *as long as the interest of the debt continued to be paid ;* for, that, if the quantity of paper were to be so *diminished* as to bring

the pound note to be worth 20s. in gold, *the people who pay the taxes to support the funds must all be ruined ;* and this ruin is now actually taking place in consequence of *an attempt to raise the value of the paper.* The Bank, in endeavouring to follow the advice, *and to act upon the principles, of the Bullion Committee,* has plunged agriculture and trade and rents and debts and credits all into confusion. And was not this a consequence for any man of common sense to foresee ? If his head were not clear enough to conceive the idea, was it not so plainly marked out for him in my "*Paper against Gold*" as to be palpable to one almost an idiot ? Was it not as plain as your nose is upon your face, that the land (from which all ability to pay taxes proceeds) could never pay interest in paper worth 20s. in the pound, for money which had been borrowed for it, and salaries (including pay of soldiers and sailors) which had taken place, in a paper worth 12s. or 15s. in the pound ? When wheat was 15s. a bushel, the land was able to pay ; but, if wheat be, by a diminution of the quantity of paper, made worth only 7s. a bushel, can it still be able to pay ? The Corn Bill is, as

I always said it would be, wholly unavailing. But, what a monstrous absurdity, to deal out a Corn Bill, with one hand, in order to *protect* the farmer; and, with the other hand, to mow him down by a diminution of the paper-money.—To make this matter plain to you, Sir, if it be not so already, let us suppose the interest of the Debt and the other expenses to be paid *in wheat* instead of money; and, that farmer Gripum is assessed at 500 bushels of wheat, leaving him 200 for his landlord and 300 for other purposes, and that he never grows any thing but wheat. All of a sudden the government comes and demands 1,000 bushels, instead of 500. It is clear, that the landlord goes without his rent, and that Gripum must be instantly ruined, if he has no extraneous fund to resort to; and, this can be the case in comparatively few instances. Well, now, how does this differ from the paper operation? In consequence of the great quantity of paper-money, Gripum can pay his share of the interest of the Debt and of the expenses of Army, Royal family, &c. &c. by selling 500 bushels of his wheat; but, the Government, or the Bank, or both, or the *Thing* that sways it, call

it by what name you will, diminishes the quantity of paper so as to compel poor Gripum, whose helmet shone so bright against the Jacobins and Levellers, to sell the whole of the 1,000 bushels to pay his share of the interest of the Debt and of the Expenses incurred by the Anti-jacobin war. Now, where is the *difference* in the two cases?—I have, you will say, supposed an extreme case. I have supposed Gripum to be wholly swallowed up at once, helmet, uniform, horse and all; but, if these extreme cases have not very frequently occurred, the effect is only different *in degree*; and because the farmers are not *all completely smashed at one blow*, you are *not to suppose, that the blow is ineffectual as to the total smashing*. The greater part of farmers have, they *must* have, some *capital*; that is to say, the amount of a year or two's produce, over and above the demands of the current year. Some have money at use. In these cases, they flee to the capital to sustain them under the first blow, and to obtain a little time for them. Some are able to stand two or

three blows. But, I imagine, that a second blow will, if inflicted, nearly turn them up. The tradesman feels, twitch for twitch, with the farmer. Thus is the depression felt through all the veins of the community, and thus do you experience a degree of embarrassment, which that bold botherer, PITT, never had to encounter. He got over the stoppage of cash-payments at the Bank by reports of Committees, subscribing combinations, false alarms, and divers other devices, calculated to deceive a people full of fear of the enemy, and, from their natural credulity, easily duped. But, *yours is a case that can receive no aid from trick and contrivance.* It is not now a question of *jacobin* or *anti-jacobin*; it is no question of *alarm*; no question about *religion* or *government*; no Yeomanry Cavalry, Loyal Associations, or Volunteer Corps will *now avail*. No appeals from the *forum* or the *pulpit* will be of any use. It is not a matter of *sedition* or *treason-*

*able practices.* There are no *Corresponding Societies*, or *Pop-gun plots*. It is not a question of *passion* but of *money*. The means that would put down a thousand market mobs will now avail nothing. *Majorities* and *minorities* are here out of the question. No *acts of parliament* or *proclamations*; no *Societies for the Suppression of Vice*; no LANCASTER or BELL'S *Schools*; no *Bible-Associations*, will do any good."

Just so; is it not! You have tried all the tricks, and they have all failed. You have tried *Suspensions of Habeas Corpus*; you have tried *Gagging-bills*; you have tried *plots* enough; you have tried *Sidmouth's Circulars*; you have tried the *Yeomanry Cavalry* to the utmost and their sabres too; you have tried *Six-Acts*, and have made it law that we shall be banished if we endeavour to bring you into contempt: And, still, that Devil of the Boroughmongers, the Debt, lives and sticks to you like a leech! Outcries against



*Sedition and Blasphemy* you have tried to their utmost. "No Popery" has been pressed into the service. And still the Boroughmongers' Devil lives, and lives jovially too. Speeches and Sermons and Charges and all other sorts of things have you tried. And still the Boroughmongers are more uneasy than ever!

But, pray, what *justification* have you for having neglected to act upon the knowledge taught you in the article that I have just quoted? What *defence* have you? If there be any such thing as *Ministerial Responsibility*, what ground of charge can be better than that which is to be found in your neglect of the knowledge conveyed to you in the above quoted article? Was it not your *duty* to attend to it? Was it not your duty duly to consider the matter; to see whether it were reasonable or not; to see whether the cause there stated were really the cause of the evil? Now all the world sees that the cause was there truly and clearly laid be-

fore you; now you are, though with great reluctance, compelled to acknowledge this yourself; now you are proposing to make *new banks*, and to perpetuate *small notes* in order to *increase the quantity of the currency* for the purpose of *alleviating the distress*. This, then, if there were a reformed parliament, would be the time to call you to account for neglecting to attend to my advice, and to the knowledge that I communicated to you, in 1815; and, if I were now in the House of Commons, I would soon let you see, that you are not to destroy hundreds of thousands of families of farmers and tradesmen without being put upon your defence. I do not mean defence against *speeches*. I mean defence against *articles of accusation regularly drawn up and moved!* That is what I mean. I agree perfectly with Sir F. BURDETT, in what he said on Tuesday night; "That measure (Peel's Bill) together with those that had preceded it, had brought the country from

“hope to despair. There was no  
 “measure of the Noble Lord, or  
 “of any other minister, which  
 “had been so ruinous; there was  
 “no state more distressing than  
 “that produced by those changes;  
 “there could be no greater blun-  
 “der—there could be no *greater*  
 “*crime* [cheers.] Yes, he would  
 “say the evils had been exces-  
 “sive; and ministers should ac-  
 “tually be *impeached* for not  
 “having taken proper measures  
 “for preventing the *destructive*  
 “*consequences*. How *many fami-*  
 “*lies*, how many men, had it  
 “brought to complete, though  
 “unexpected ruin?”

Yes; but the worst of it is, the Honourable Baronet only *talks* of impeaching you. What the country wants is a man to *do* as well as talk; and, unreformed as the parliament is, an *impeachment*, really brought forward on this ground would have a great and most excellent effect. It would make you and your colleagues clearly *understand* the subject, at any rate. It would put all the

matter *in due form* for you. And why, then, is the thing *not done*? I may, I trust, reasonably put this question to Sir Francis Burdett. He says, that you *should* be impeached; and, why does he not impeach you? He that says it should be done, is the man to *do it*.

If he were so disposed, the matter of charge would arrange itself somewhat in this way: I. That so many hundreds of thousands of families have been totally ruined by the measures which have altered the value of the currency; II. That the Ministers proposed, and caused to be adopted, these measures; III. That they did this *wilfully*, because they had before them, at every stage, Cobbett's Register, demonstrating to them that the total ruin aforesaid would be amongst the consequences of those measures.

Nothing would be easier than the clapping on you such a blister as this; but, you know well, that the Honourable Baronet is *not in*

earnest; that he means to do no such a thing; that he has too much interest in the stability of "*the Regiment*," as he himself once well called it; and that, in short, from all attacks of this serious and efficient kind you are as safe as any *great, bloated, squeaking, bag of tripe* is from a pistol *without ball in it*, fired off for the purpose of causing that squeaking bag to *live with honour!* But, if we had a man, as I have often said; if we had a man, he would soon put your case before the country in *due form*; and that you know well. He would soon put your deeds down in black and white; and would leave you to *jest*, if you could find stomach for it. A man would teach you that the plea of *ignorance* is no plea for those who receive enormous salaries as *statesmen*, and who assist in passing laws to punish men with *banishment for life*, for attempting to bring them into *contempt!* If a tradesman, or servant, undertake that which he is incapable of, and does great injury to the em-

ployer in consequence, he is liable to an *action of damages*. If a man falsely pass himself off as a regular bred surgeon, when he is no surgeon, and kill another in cutting off his arm, he is to be *tried for murder*. And, if a man take upon him the managing of the affairs of a nation, and bring misery upon millions by means against which he has been constantly warned, while he himself is pocketing an enormous salary, is he not to be *answerable* in some shape or other?

Mr. ROBINSON complained, on Tuesday night, that all the blame was laid on the Ministers; that the evils were all imputed to them. If not to them, to *whom*, pray? To the *Parliament*? I do not, for my part, care which. *Reform the Parliament*, then. But to say that *nobody else* could have done better, is impudent indeed, when you have had before you, for the last *twelve years* a *demonstration*, that any attempt to resume cash-payments *without reducing the interest of the Debt* would produce

the very effects that that attempt has now produced. Since the year 1809, inclusive, there have been 674 Political Registers published ; and, in each of more than 200 of those Registers, there is enough contained to show that you and your colleagues have brought this evil upon the country against the warnings, against the remonstrances, against the demonstrations laid before you.

But, you *did not read*, perhaps ? That is your fault. But you did read, or you ordered *Gibbs* and others to read for you ! *Gibbs's* reading was followed by a *practical result*, of which the nation has long been feeling the effect. Sidmouth told the Lords, that *he* read very carefully the *cheap publications* ; that he laid them before the law-officers ; and that he was *sorry to say*, that they could find nothing in them to *prosecute*. So that you were hunting after matter to *prosecute*, and not after matter to *instruct you* in your duty ! In your eagerness to hunt out something to *prose-*

*cute*, you overlooked all the warnings that you ought to have attended to. However, the landlords and the parsons supported you in all this ; and it is they who will, at last, have to bear the consequences. The farmers, as a *body*, supported you too ; and their share of the suffering they have endured, or will endure. What is now passing under our eyes, and what is now coming on ; these things are no more than the natural consequences of the support given to you and your colleagues by those who now suffer and are to suffer.

But, you are *turning about*, and will *save these your friends* ! Oh, no ! That is too late. *Some* you may save for a while ; but, many are already ruined ; and justice will fall with its heavy hand upon *all* before it be over. The present *schemes*, the *new bank note project*, even the *repeal of Peel's Bill*, will not save your supporters. They must *all come down* before it be over, do what you will, or do what they



will, or can, to prevent it. Though it is truly curious to observe the scheming, the "general working of events" that is now going on.

There is such a mass of scheming at work, that it would require a good thick volume barely to give a description of it. Let me, therefore, confine myself to the prominent, not "the *fundamental*," features of your own schemes. The *funding of the half-pay and pensions* is, as Mr. LENNARD called it, a mere *hoax*; but, it is to serve as the pretext for *taking off some taxes*. As to this; the landlords, and all of us indeed, say, go on, *hoax or hoax not*; so that you *take off taxes*. Fund the sunshine or moonshine, if you like, so that you take off taxes. But, the other scheme is of a more serious nature, the scheme for *making paper-payments perpetual*. I long to see this scheme in a *tangible shape*. I long to see it in distinct propositions, as thus: 1. That Country banks as well as the Borough-bank shall be permitted to make small notes

*for everlasting*, that is to say, for 22 years to come. 2. That Country Ragmen shall be able to make Borough-bank rags a *legal tender* in payment of their own rags. 3. That the Borough-bank notes shall be a *legal tender* to all eternity in the payment of taxes.

This is the scheme that has been what the French call *ébauché*, or *thrown out*. Now, then, let us see that scheme adopted; and let us see you *stop there!* It will be a repeal of *part of Peel's Bill*, which puts *an end to legal tender on the 1st of May 1823*. It will be that. It will be an act to *prevent the return to cash payments* as far as it goes. But, now mark me, if nothing *more* be done, you will not do much. For, though the Country Ragmen will be protected against demands for gold, *the Borough-bank will not!* That renowned concern *must* continue to pay in sovereigns, or in bars at 77s. 10½d. an ounce *till next May*; and then it *must* pay in *sovereigns on demand*. What, therefore, will

you get by this scheme, unless you go farther? Your scheme, though it will make paper *legal tender*; though it will repeal Peel's Bill in part; though it will fulfil my prophecy; though it will hoist the Gridiron and give us the broiling Feast; though it will bring thousands of poor geese to a premature death; though it will do all this, it will not *better* the lot of the landlords and parsons. It will not raise prices; and consequently, it will not give *rents* and leave *tithes*, for these latter the poor must have.

All these juggling schemes are nothing, unless you alter the Bill as to the price at which the Borough-bank is to put out gold. It is *beastly*, really *beastly*; not absurd, not stupid, but *beastly*, to suppose, that prices can rise, on an average of seasons, without an addition to the quantity of the circulating medium; and you may make banks as numerous as chandler's shops, you can make no such addition without *repealing Peel's*

*Bill in whole*. If you add to the quantity of the paper, it will sink in value; and one of two things will happen; namely, there will be *two prices at once*, or people will go to the Borough-bank, get gold for the paper, and send the gold out of the country. This is so plain that even the geese that we are going to broil must perceive it, if the matter were clearly stated to them. And I do not know, that I shall not, before we kill them, state it to an *Assembly*, a *House*-full, of them.

Well, then, will you make the Borough-Bank *stop again*? Ah! do! Do, if you are man enough! Why, it will be a jest for ever and ever. Every feature in this world, except it be of a face belonging to "*the regiment*" will be set in motion with laughter. Now, I verily believe, that this will be done. Nay, if it be not done, the rest of the scheme is mere mockery. I see you are *preparing to give way*. You did not *answer Mr. Atwood*. You put that off, till

Mr. Western's motion came forward! Oh! You did not *reprobate* Mr. Western's motion *before hand*! And, I verily believe, that you will *give way*; that you will yield; and that your half-way scheme will be *stopped in its progress* by Mr. Western's motion. The thing may take this turn: Mr. Western may *amend* your scheme. What think you of that?

However, when this is once done, and done I verily believe it will be, there is an end of the **THING**! Mind that. Its breath is knocked out of it. It may live some little time in name; but, it will be a mass of *Assignats*; and this will be notorious to the whole world. There will be monstrous injustice attending it; but that is not the thing to look at. It will lay the whole **THING** bare. It will be *open and notorious bankruptcy*, just as much as that of the French Convention, when it passed its law of *Assignats*. All the world will know, that cash can never again be seen, till the paper be destroyed root and

branch. All the lies about the ability of the Borough-bank to pay in gold will die at once. All the impostors will vanish, and will take some time at any rate before a new race will get credit enough to cheat the nation. Any attempt, or, rather, pretence to set bounds to the paper issues will end in failure and ridicule. Mr. Western talks of a *metallic basis* even while he proposes to repeal *Peel's Bill*. What basis, unless payment in gold on demand? Will he *lower the standard*? No matter what, however. It is all confusion. It is all hubbub. It is all *going to pieces*; and thus I leave it in your lordship's hands, desiring you to comfort yourself with reflecting on the *clapping of hands* and on the *huzzas*, which you received from the Honourable House, when you walked in after your memorable exploits in restoring the Bourbon!

WM. COBBETT.

TO  
MY DISCIPLES.

—  
“ Now’s the time for mirth and glee :  
“ Sing and laugh and dance with me.”  
—

Kensington, 9 May 1822.

MY FRIENDS,

LET others employ themselves as they choose, it is for us to *enjoy ourselves*. I have to speak to you about preparations for the *Feast of the Gridiron*; but, before I do that I must call your attention to something that has been said by Mr. WESTERN, and also to a speech of *Lockhart the Brave*, who, you remember, *challenged* me at Winchester, in the winter of 1817. You have a share in these matters as well as I have. You are equally interested with myself; and you ought, all over the country, now to insist upon your *right to exult*.

I always said, when insulted and flouted by the THING and its adherents, that *our time would*

*come*; and, I said, too, that I would *claim our due*; that our enemies should not *steal into our track* unnoticed; that, when they came to our shop, they should come in at the *street-door*, or get kicked and cuffed from the back-door.

I knew they *must come*, and I suspected they would endeavour to slip in without being seen.

This they have been attempting in many instances; but in no instance more shamefully than in that of *Mr. Western*. That Gentleman published a pamphlet full of plagiarisms on me from one end to the other. He published a second, and, in that second, he quoted *Locke* as his great teacher.

I noticed that; and, the other day, at the Essex Meeting, he took what he appears to have thought his revenge. I shall insert what I allude to; and then comment upon it. This is a great matter, *with us*, at any rate; for, we must not suffer ourselves to be plundered at this rate with impunity to the plunderers. You will observe, that, just before the



meeting at Chelmsford opened, a boy, who was in front of the Town Hall, selling Cobbett's "*Farmer's Wife's Friend*" was "*driven away by the Magistrates,*" of whom, you will bear in mind, this Mr. Western was *one*. However, take the report as given in the Morning Chronicle.

The Hon. Gentleman after some further observations, said, that he had now to read to them the opinions of a man who was well known to them all, and who, by the by, had taken him to task pretty severely; he meant Mr. Cobbett [cries of "put him down," and of "no, no."] He had been attacked by Mr. Cobbett, because he quoted from Locke in preference to quoting from Mr. Cobbett. He really had respect for talents of every description, wherever he found them, but he did conceive that the meeting would bear him out in believing that more importance ought to be attached to the writings of Mr. Locke than to those of Mr. Cobbett—(Loud applause.)—For it was well known that Mr. Locke had a century ago broached the same sentiments as those since put forward by Mr. Cobbett, and therefore Mr. Cobbett might perhaps be charged, and not without reason, with having derived his opinions

from Mr. Locke. But notwithstanding all this, Mr. Cobbett had strongly predicted the effects of Mr. Peel's Bill. It was, however, but justice to add, that Sir R. Peel, a gentleman whose character was admired and venerated by all who knew him, had previously predicted the effects of this measure. He stated that he could not, without alarm, contemplate the effects of the measure which was about to be introduced. He should now read to the meeting an extract from a Pamphlet written in America, from which it was well known he had shortly after returned to this country. Mr. Cobbett did, on that occasion, certainly draw a most prophetic picture of the distresses which this Bill was likely to bring upon the country. He should read to the meeting a short extract from that work:—

"Of all the wild schemes that  
"ever issued from the heads of  
"weak and obstinate men, this  
"(Peel's Bill) is the wildest, this  
"is the most visionary; and the  
"fate of it will be something like  
"this: after having caused un-  
"speakable misery among the  
"poorer classes; after having  
"crushed a great part of the mid-  
"dle classes; after having driven  
"away to foreign lands a consi-  
"derable portion of the real re-  
"sources of the country; after  
"having brought the nation to the  
"eve of some terrible convulsion;

“after all this, it will be abandoned; and never will an expectation of seeing cash-payments again exist in any mind except that of a born idiot. The result can be prevented only by a previous convulsion.”

There was, however, another part of Mr. Cobbett's writings which it was perhaps more difficult to understand. He meant the opinions expressed by him in his Number of the 4th of April. He there recommended Mr. Peel's Bill as a panacea for all the distresses of the country.---His words were these:---

“This is the state of things now; but let Peel's Bill go into full effect; let legal tender be put an end to; let the Ragman be compelled to give gold, and not Mother Bank notes in exchange for his rags; let the country people be able to go to him next May, with Peel's Bill in their hand, and say, ‘give me a sovereign for this rag;’ let that happy day come, and then we shall see gold all over the country, and wheat on an average of years, at 4 shillings a-bushel, or perhaps, at three shillings! This is what I have been telling the money-hoarders for a long time. Ah! but this ‘happy day’ is not to arrive! Castle-reagh is coming with his measure to be submitted to the ‘wisdom of Parliament,’ and it is now to decide, whether or not it be the best

“course of policy to establish a metallic basis!” In short, a law is now to be proposed to enable country bankers to refuse to pay in gold after May 1823, until May 1833! Make it for ever! None of your haggling about it. It is eternity.”

You will at once see the meanness of this conduct on the part of Mr. WESTERN. The last quotation from me you will perceive he has garbled famously. He has left out what was most essential to my meaning; and what a want of comprehension or want of candour must he have had to say, that I “recommended PEEL'S BILL as a panacea for all the distresses of the country”! When it is notorious, that, from the hour it was passed to the present hour I have been describing it and the measures that preceded it as the cause of all the distress! What a silly thing to say, or what a foul misrepresentation! Nay, that very pamphlet of mine which the *Magistrates* had “driven away,” as well as that which Mr. Western was quoting, proved

the falsehood of this assertion of his.

However, let me not take up too much of your time with this matter. Two points I will just touch on. He says, that *Locke* wrote a *hundred years ago*; and that, therefore, "I may have *borrowed from him*." Borrowed, *what*? Why, he never wrote about *Peel's Bill*, did he? Did he ever hear about cash-payments to supersede paper-payments? Did he ever hear about National Debts? Did he, could he, write about any such matter? Oh, no! And his *Essay on Money*, and even the passage quoted by Mr. Western, is *false* in doctrine; and, what proof do we want of this more than this one fact, that *LOCKE* was *one of Mr. Peel's authorities for the passing of his Bill*? So that this is a very pretty story indeed. A very pretty piece of humbug, to pretend that my prophecies were stolen from *LOCKE*!

Well; but there was "SIR  
"ROBERT PEEL, venerated by

"*every body*." That is false.

All that I know, and talk with about him, despise the pompous old proprietor of Spinning Jennies. Not because he is a Master Manchester Manufacturer; but, because they have seen nothing in his conduct to excite any other feeling. They remember that he was one of those who *subscribed towards carrying on the war against the people of France*.

They remember all his movements well, and feel towards him any thing but *veneration*. But, what of *him*, Mr. Western?

Why, he *foretold* the evils of his son's Bill *before* I did. Indeed?

What, before I wrote the *Letter to Tierney*, which was published in England *nine months before* the Bill was passed? This, however, is too contemptible to be dwelt on. Yet, we must ask Mr.

Western how it came to pass that he himself, who had always had *Locke*, and who, at the passing of the Bill, heard Sir Robert Peel, *did not pay attention to either*, and suffered Peel's Bill

to pass *without one word of opposition to it?*

Now for "*Lockhart the Brave*," whose speech of Wednesday evening I here insert. Yow will see that the gentleman is in great anxiety about the *Church*, and about the *Poor*. But, let us hear him first, and then talk a little in our turn.

MR. LOCKHART said, he did not wish to take up much of the time of the House, but he wished the question then in consideration to be understood, and not to be blended and mixed up with questions of the nature just now proposed. A very *melancholy*, and, he believed a *true picture*, had been given of the distresses of the country. An apprehension had been entertained that there would be no means of employing the poor; and it was stated that the hand of every man was raised against each other; not indeed in actual hostility, but in those active law proceedings, in which each was willing to inculcate his neighbour, and to save himself harmless. To this it was added, that the clergy, that great and venerable body of men, was reduced to the brink of ruin: and if the case at Norfolk was truly reported, respecting the obligation to pay the

poor-rates out of the tithes on land otherwise unproductive, then the destruction of the property of that great and venerable body was completed, which, if the House had some time ago agreed to regulate, it might have been exempted. The remedies hinted at before, and now more openly avowed, were the repeal of *Peel's Bill*, which few liked to advocate, a great reduction of taxation, and a forced reduction of the national debt. For his part he considered both the last mentioned remedies as one and the same. [Hear, hear! from the Ministerial benches.] The reduction of twenty millions of taxation must have the effect of producing a forced reduction of the debt. [Hear, hear!] As long as he knew the agriculturists, and he knew them long, this was not their wish. In the 500 petitions which were presented to the House on the agricultural distress, he allowed that a reduction of taxation was called for, but in a reasonable proportion, and not on such a scale as would produce a forced reduction of the national debt. Some attributed the existing evils to foreign competition, and others to superabundant produce. Of the latter he was by no means convinced. The distress had occasioned the agriculturists to go into the market, but that was no proof of agricultural distress. If he went into a pawnbroker's shop and saw that there was a greater quantity of apparel



pledged than usual, that would not be a proof to him that the people who pledged them had a superabundance of clothes. [Hear, and a laugh.] He would rather imagine that distress had occasioned the overstock, and not a superabundance. He then proceeded to remark upon what had fallen from the Honourable Member for Portarlington, (Mr. Ricardo) as one mode of relieving distress by throwing poor lands out of cultivation. If he did not know his *amiable disposition*, and the *goodness of his heart*, he must have been inclined to doubt the existence of those qualities which marked his character, when he spoke of land apparently without any consideration of the *sensitive and suffering beings by which it was occupied*. But what were poor lands? He did not know what they were. Perhaps the Honourable Member for Portarlington was for throwing out of cultivation all lands which did not possess any great quantity of vegetable mould, such as was mostly composed of *calcareous and silicious* matter; but this formed a great proportion of the land of England, and if he were to throw such lands out of cultivation, *how were the poor who occupied them to be employed?* Were they capable of any other labour but the cultivation of the land? Could their hard hands be applied to any of the arts? And were not the manufactures of the

country already overstocked? The Honourable Member for Portarlington ought to be prepared with some prospectus, showing how the poor could be employed and absorbed in the occupations of society. There was a great deal of *poor land in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Buckinghamshire, and Gloucestershire*. If these were thrown out of cultivation, and if the ports were not opened, what might not be the danger resulting from an *infuriated population deprived of their accustomed food?*

Now, Mr. Lockhart, let me have a little talk with you, and let me begin with the *parsons*. You know, that, in March 1817, the Dungeon Bill being just then about to pass, or it might be passed, I had to meet you, at Winchester, you being backed by a band of the *blackest* and most noisy and abusive ruffians that ever wore clean shirts. You know, that you supported, at their suggestion, an Address to the Regent, containing, amongst other things, a pledge to uphold the *Church*. You know, that I proposed to put in the word *tithes* instead of *Church*, and to add

something about *Reform of Parliament*. You remember how I *worked* you, and how angry you were. But, do you remember this; that I told the *parsons* that they, *above all others*, ought to be for a *Reform of the Parliament*; for, that, nothing but Reform could save their *tithes* from being *swallowed up in four years' time*! Those very words I uttered over and over again, amidst the *hootings* and *revilings* of, at least, *two hundred parsons*; and this can, if necessary, be proved on the oath of hundreds of witnesses.

Let us, then, my Disciples, be merry; let us laugh and sing at what is now taking place as to this "great and venerable body." I was *one year too soon in my guess*; though, really, the pinch began last year. We have now *Lockhart the Brave's* word for it, that "this great and venerable body is on the brink of ruin." And why? Because of the *weight of the taxes*, which is owing, as we all know, to a *want of Reform*, and to *nothing else*! But, what

can Mr. Lockhart mean by the House doing any thing to *exempt the tithes* from poor-rates? Does he suppose, that the parson is to thrive, is to grow fat, is to gain, by a state of things that ruins the farmer, and leaves the landlord without rent? "If the decision in Norfolk be *truly* stated." What does he mean by this? How can any *other decision* take place? Here is the farmer with no profit; here is the landlord with no rent; and, is the parson to have all his *usual gains*? Is he to have as *much clear* as if the farmer had profit and the landlord rent? This really is nonsense; begging Mr. Lockhart's pardon, it is sheer nonsense.

This "great and venerable body" have had their full share of the gains from high prices and depreciated paper-money; they were always the foremost, the very foremost, in urging on the war; they have always been the most zealous in keeping down those who prayed for a reduction of taxes and for Reform of Par-

liament; and, as their kingdom is not of this world, as they have solemnly vowed to disregard the things of the flesh, they can hardly complain now, that they have little or nothing left in the shape of tithes. Oh, no! Such honest and pious persons can never grudge to give up their tithes to the Fundlords. They know that the money was borrowed to carry on a war for our Holy Religion. It succeeded. It restored the Bourbons, the Pope, and the Inquisition; and, it would be worse than blasphemy to suppose that these "venerable" persons care a straw about the tithes, when these are demanded to pay back the sums borrowed to hire Germans and Russians to put down the Atheistical French.

But, it will be said, it is not to the *Fundlords* that the tithes are going, but to the *paupers*, for the tithes are taken away in *poor-rates*.

Stop a little. The *excise* and *other taxes* go to the Fundlords and to the Army and Navy and other things that have chiefly

grown out of the war. To pay these taxes the landlord and farmer are so beggared as to have nothing left to pay poor-rates with; and, this being the case, they *throw the poor upon the tithe!* This is the way, in which it works. It is rather complicated. Perhaps it might be better to *make the tithes over*, at once, to the Fundholders. To pay so much Debt off with them. Some scheme will, I dare say, be found out, by-and-by, to *simplify* the thing; but, it is by no means easy to imagine any possible mode of saving this "great and venerable body," without a large, and a *very large, reduction of the interest of the Debt*; and, as it is agreed, on all hands, that this would produce what is called "a *revolution*," the "venerable body" do seem to be very much in that situation usually typified by a *cleft-stick*.

Mr. Lockhart had some remarks upon Mr. Ricardo's idea of *relief* to arise from the "throwing of poor lands out of cultivation." An

odd way, surely enough, to relieve the *owner* of those lands. But, it is not the *owner*; oh, no! not the *landlord* at all, that Mr. Lockhart seems to care about. His care (kind soul!) is for "the *sensitive* and suffering *beings* who *occupy* and who *till* the land." *Rents!* Devil take rents! What does he care about *them*? It is for the poor *farmers* and *labourers* that he feels. He knows, he says, that there is a good deal of poor, *calcarious* land in *Norfolk*, *Cambridgeshire*, *Buckinghamshire* and *Gloucestershire*. And I can tell him of some at a place called *Pressure*, near Bishop's Waltham in Hampshire! Some land such no Norfolk man ever even *dreamed* of, much less *saw*. Some land where the mould is not a bit thicker on the chalk than the crust of a good stout-timbered apple-pudding is on the apples beneath it. Has Mr. Lockhart never *heard* of *these lands*?

But, Mr. Lockhart has a totally wrong view of the matter. I can assure him, that, even on this

apple-pudding crust land, the farmer and the labourer will, in the end, do pretty well; as well as they ever have done, *though Peel's Bill be pushed along to the full extent*. The *landlord* indeed! He must look sharply about him; and must, in fact, go without rent. Let us see a little how the "general *working* of events" will affect lands thus situated; and, come, Mr. Lockhart, let you and I suppose a farm to lie at *Pressure* with two full inches of mould on the chalk and that mould mixed pretty well with flint-stones. The farmer can pay no rent. The landlord turns him out, after having sold him up. On the face of the habitable globe another "*sensitive being*," with a penny to risk, is not to be found to risk it at *Pressure*. The landlord tries to farm himself; then he has the rates and taxes to pay, and gets, besides, nothing for rent. He *abandons* the land, and *leaves* the labourers to starve; leaves these "*sensitive beings*" to die with hunger, eh? Oh no! Mr. Lockhart. The Overseer goes to *seize*;



he finds nothing to seize but the house and land; but, if he find and can find no *occupant*, he *seizes them*. And to save himself all sorts of out-goings, he allots the land to the use of the "sensitive beings" themselves! Oh, no! Mr. Lockhart; these "sensitive beings" will not die with hunger even at *Pressure*. Oh, no! Mr. Ricardo, the poor lands will not be "*thrown out of cultivation*," merely because they no longer yield rent or tithes.

These false notions arise from the want of a capacity to look well into and to analyse the matter. Mr. Ricardo and Mr. Lockhart forget, that *property* is never *absolute*; that no man has an *absolute property in any thing*, and, perhaps, less in land than in any thing else. Mr. Wodehouse says, that I have "*no regard for the rights of property*." I have as much as Pitt had, when he *redeemed the land tax*; that is to say, when he took away part of every landed estate in the kingdom.

That part was taken away to be given to those that lent money to the Government. Those who bought that gave the money to the Government. And, where is the difference, whether the estate be taken away to be given to the fundlords and army and other things, or whether it be taken to feed the labourers, who, in consequence of the taxes they pay, are unable to get a sufficiency of food without it?

I know, that it is very unpleasant for men to hear it said, that they have not an absolute property in estates that they have so long called *theirs*; but *have they*, if the government can lay a tax on it; then make the tax *perpetual*; and then *sell the tax*? If it can act thus as to the *fiftieth part*; it can do it as to the *whole*. Then again, if the whole can be taken, if the whole income of the land can be taken *indirectly*, as is the case at present in numerous instances, and must soon be the case generally; if this be, as

it unquestionably is, can any man be said to have an *absolute property* in the land he calls his ?

These, my friends, are times and circumstances that try things to the *very bottom*. They compel us to reason deeply whether we will or not. They show the utter worthlessness of *parchments*, when a *government* has demands to make. No lands will be "*thrown out of cultivation*." And why *poor-lands* should any more than rich who can possibly give a reason ? This fear, therefore, of Mr. Lockhart is perfectly groundless. The mistake arises solely from the erroneous notion, that *rents* and *tithes* are necessary to the cultivation of the land, while the fact is, that cultivation can go on very well without either. The short and long of the matter is this : there have hitherto been two classes of persons, the one called *landlords* and the other *parsons*, each receiving a considerable share of the produce of the land ; but now, the govern-

ment standing in need of taxes to so large an amount as to swallow up these two shares, *these two classes can receive them no longer*. This is the whole case. There is not another word necessary in the statement of it. As to whether the government does right or does wrong in demanding the whole, or any part, of these two shares ; that is a question to be settled by the parties. It is one in which I really feel very little interest, except as a matter full of curiosity with regard to the manner in which it seems to be *working*.

And, now we come to *our* affair. In order to *save these two shares*, divers schemes are on foot, and, amongst the rest, a repeal in part or in whole of Peel's Bill. It seems settled, that a repeal in part is *speedily to take place*. The *grand Gridiron* to be hoisted at No. 183, Fleet-Street, will be ready ; and the Feast will be holden in London as soon after the passing of the Bill as will allow of time to

spread a knowledge of the thing throughout the country. It is intended, that the Fare, as far as relates to food, shall consist of *geese*, broiled whole; and that the drink shall be made entirely from *simples*. I approve very much of *country festivals*. I will let my correspondents know, beforehand, the precise moment of the day that *Mr. Peel's health will be drunk*, that we may all be putting up our prayers for that precious

health at one and the same instant. As to the *Farce* to be acted on the occasion, the time is so short that I am almost afraid it cannot be ready. However, if written, it shall be published in the Register a fortnight, at least, before the day for holding the feast.

I am, your Friend,

WM. COBBETT.